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ARMY MEDICAL LIBRARY

VOL.VII, No. 3 NEWS MARCH 1952

ISSUED FROM THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

1951 CATALOG

The 1951 Army Medical Library Catalog will be issued in two parts: Part One Authors and Part Two Subjects. Both parts will be printed four columns to a page and bound in a single volume of about 850 pages. The Catalog is expected to be published in April. It will be sold through the Card Division of the Library of Congress at $17.50 a copy.

REUBEN PEISS

Mr. Reuben Peiss, who had expected to become Assistant Librarian for Acquisitions at the Army Medical Library this summer, died suddenly at the Stanford-Lane Hospital in San Francisco on 23 February 1952. For the Library and for the profession at large, his passing is a great blow; his many friends testify how extraordinary a talent, how warm and rare a personality, is lost to us.

A COLLECTION DIVIDED

Recently moved to the Cleveland Branch were some 20,000 monographs published prior to 1851. Another much more considerable move is now being contemplated, which will involve the shifting of over 100,000 volumes between one annex building and another several blocks away from the main Library in Washington.

In terms of use, this means that some loan requests received in Washington must be transferred to Cleveland, and vice versa. The answering of reference questions is similarly complicated, and perhaps to a greater degree. As long as the present rate of acquisitions continues (and there is no reason to believe that it will decrease), and as long as the Library continues to be inadequately housed, this unhealthy condition may be expected to persist.

Printing cost borne by Association of Honorary Consultants to the Army Medical Library.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN LIBRARIES

The Army Medical Library staff, both in Washington and in Cleveland, will continue to do its best to overcome the difficulties inherent in the splitting of a large collection on a single subject. Users can speed up service by addressing the History of Medicine Division, Cleveland, for all manuscripts and monographs published prior to 1851, and by addressing the main Library in Washington for later works.

USE OF ARMY MEDICAL LIBRARY
OCT. 51 THROUGH JAN. 52

	Reference Questions		Photo-duplication Orders		Books Loaned		T O T A L	
	hrs	%	hrs	%	hrs	%	hrs	%
Armed Forces	1456	27	14309	61	2051	45	17816	53
Gov't Agencies	1092	20	1986	8	1143	25	4221	13
Gov't - Total	2548	47	16295	69	3194	70	22037	66
Civilian	2863	53	7407	31	1366	30	11636	34
GRAND TOTAL	5411	100	23702	100	4560	100	33673	100

The chart above shows the amount of time expended by the Army Medical Library staff during a recent four-month period in filling certain categories of requests received from various sources. The three armed services receive just over half of the total, and when combined with the other federal agencies account for two-thirds of the total use, the other third going to civilians. What is not shown, and what we are unable to determine from our present statistics, is the proportion of the civilian work which is going to government contractors.

The figures reveal, incidentally, the enormous proportions to which our photoduplication service, which we conceive of as an extension of our interlibrary-loan service, has grown. The figures here include not only filming, editing, and processing time, but also time required to verify references, pull volumes from the shelves, carry them to and from the photoduplication laboratory, and replace them on the shelves. Even at that, it averages out at just over two minutes for each page copied.

DEATH OF HONORARY CONSULTANT

Rear Admiral Harold W. Smith, Medical Corps, U. S. Navy, retired, died on 4 February 1952 at the U. S. Naval Hospital, Bethesda, Md. Admiral Smith served in the Navy from 1904 to 1946; in March of the latter year he was awarded the Legion of Merit for his achievements in medical research.

LEONARDO DA VINCI ANNIVERSARY

The five hundredth anniversary of the birth of Leonardo da Vinci, the celebrated Renaissance artist-scientist, will be observed at the Army Medical Library by an exhibit, and by a lecture, on the afternoon of 15 April, by Dr. Chauncey D. Leake, Vice-President of the University of Texas.

CURRENT LIST CUMULATIVE INDEX

The huge (1052 p.) cumulative index issue of the 1951 Current List of Medical Literature has finally made its appearance. This annual cumulation of the monthly combined author and subject indexes is published in two parts (A-L, M-Z) because of the binding problems which its size presented.

The editing of the more than half a million entry slips was begun toward the end of last summer. The actual interfiling of slips was completed at the beginning of November, after the return of the November manuscript from the Philadelphia printing establishment responsible for publication of the Current List. A double 24-hour shift was instituted in mid-November to handle the work of mounting and assembly. The job was completed on 20 December, and shipment of manuscript was made on the following day.

Then began a series of delays over which we were unable to exercise control. A tentative delivery date was set for the end of January; various complications encountered by the printer forced this date forward into February. A succession of promised delivery dates passed by; while some copies of the publication were available earlier at the Army Medical Library, the final shipment did not reach us until 28 February. This is an indication of a further complicating factor: due to a change of policy at the Government Printing Office, the Library itself has had to undertake the wrapping and mailing of all copies going to foreign subscribers. Our mail room literally is swamped; our

people are working overtime in an all out attempt to distribute the index so as to be able to repeat the process for the January 1952 issue, which also has been involved in a series of heartbreaking delays. It would seem that about the only operation in which the Library is not directly involved is the actual running of the printing presses.

It is a satisfaction finally to have carried through this large task. But in spite of all efforts, and they were considerable, the resulting product has grave defects. It is discouraging, for example, to find that a howler like CYCCYX has escaped proofreaders, editors, and filers; it is disheartening to see in so many areas the page after page of references unbroken by main headings, even though to this eventuality we had become resigned during the process of cumulation.

On the positive side, the cumulation is an improvement over the previous cumulative issue; to anyone who will take the trouble to make comparisons, it also should be clear that the organization of this cumulative index is better than that of any individual monthly index which preceded it. In spite of the difficulties it presents, it should be a boon to all who work with medical literature. The provision of a subject and author index to over 100,000 articles of a single year, appearing fairly promptly at the close of the period, is no mean feat; it is, in fact, the largest current index in the world, if we consider it only from the point of view of number of articles represented.

After the event, it is obvious that such an index is too large for easy and efficient use; since it has to be printed in two volumes, it would have been better to cumulate it semi-annually in the first place. As the preface to the January issue (which follows on the heels of the December cumulative issue) explains, the six-months cumulation plan will be put into effect, along with other far-reaching changes which should offset in great degree the many difficulties which we have experienced with Volume 20.

Meanwhile, of journals there is no end. The February issue of the Current List (Vol. 21, No. 2) is at the printers, and the March issue is scheduled for completion on 27 March.

PLASMA SUBSTITUTES BIBLIOGRAPHY

Copies of the bibliography "Plasma Substitutes Except Those Derived from Human Blood," announced in previous issues of the News, now have been received from the printer and are available for distribution. Requests should be addressed to the Reference Division, Army Medical Library.

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